

## REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR PATRICIA A. BUTENIS DURING PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

**DHAKA, APRIL 13** -- Following is the text of remarks by Ms. Patricia A. Butenis, the newly-appointed U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh during presentation of her credentials to President Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban today (Thursday).

(Begin text)

Honorable President, it is an honor and privilege to present today my credentials as the Ambassador of the United States of America to the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Thank you for the warm reception I have received. Bangladeshis have certainly lived up to your reputation for hospitality since my arrival.

Despite the distance between our countries, we share many common values. These values include family, democracy, and economic and social development.

The events of the last year in Bangladesh showed that extremist violence is a threat to us all. I know that these extremists do not represent Bangladeshi society which is known for its diversity and tolerance. Bangladesh can be proud of its success so far in tracking down and arresting those responsible for terrorist attacks; just as Bangladeshi society can be proud for clearly rejecting extremism. We stand ready to assist in any way that we can.

Let me also commend you for the role that Bangladesh plays in promoting a safe and secure world. It was fitting that the most recent SAARC summit was held in Bangladesh as Bangladesh has long played an important role in advocating greater regional cooperation. Through your outstanding contributions to international peacekeeping efforts, Bangladesh also contributes to global security beyond South Asia.

Bangladesh and the United States share a strong commitment to democracy. Democracy consists of more than elections; protection of human rights and the rights of minorities are also important aspects of democracy. I would particularly like to commend Bangladesh for its progress in recent years in combating trafficking in persons.

Both Bangladesh and the United States are committed to economic freedom. Both of our countries want to give our citizens the chance to pursue their dreams, and allow business and government to meet the needs of the people through market forces.

The United States and Bangladesh also share a deep regard for the importance of education. Education not only provides individuals with better opportunities to lead full and productive lives; it is also a crucial pillar supporting economic prosperity. Bangladesh has been a regional leader in ensuring that girls as well as boys have access to basic education. Because

the earliest years are crucial to a child's development, our USAID program is designed to help support early childhood education.

During my tenure in Bangladesh, I will work to strengthen, broaden, and deepen the existing ties between the United States and Bangladesh, which are built on mutual respect and our common pursuit of political and economic freedom. I am committed to U.S. support for Bangladesh in its efforts to counter terrorism, strengthen democracy, reduce poverty, and promote economic prosperity.

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*Note: A Bangla translation of this article is also available from the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section (Tel: 8813440-4, Fax: 9881677; e-mail: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov); Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)*